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Bookplate of "The Leash Club, 143 East 52nd Street, New York, inside front cover.

This is a copy of an autograph (ink) diary kept by one Tyler Morse in a "Foolscap Quarto Diary / 1902 / One Day on a Page." On the reverse of the flyleaf facing the title page appears in Morse's handwriting:

[Skip line] → Tyler Morse
Record of Abyssinian Travel from Asmara in Erithea to Adis Ababa and Harrar.

October 1902 to March 1903

Tyler Morse also signed the top of the title page.

[~~Through the~~ From January 1 through April 16, 1902, Morse has in each case changed the day of the week as printed at the top of the page to read one day later. This leads me to conclude that this diary opens in 1903! His spelling is generally retained. I have found the spelling of proper names, especially place names, to be difficult to decipher. Morse frequently runs his sentences together without punctuation, and I have remedied this in the interest of ease of reading. R.E.T.]

Thursday, January 1, 1903

There is an opening page entitled "Memoranda" on which Morse enters payments to members of his party. Thus, "$1 to galla for finding cartridge belt."

Marched from Kafue to Nascet* River 17 miles 9 hours. We marched across a long plateau for three hours very monotonous and hot. The heat was particularly strong in comparison to the wretched coldness of the last few nights. The men wanted to spend the night at Herefagli where ~~grain~~ grain & food were to be obtained but we sent them on and followed on foot

* or "Nascet".

ourselves. An hour or so after luncheon we came to a deep cañon some 1200 ft deep. This road was made by Italian prisoners of the battle of Adowa. What a disgrace to the white man in Africa. It were better that they died before they became slaves of Abyssinians! This defeat and its results will have to be wiped out in blood by the English some fine day. I earnestly hope it's not far off. The road is theoretically all right but neglect has caused it to resemble a torrent bed for it's covered completely with rocks & boulders as it zig zags down the mountain side. When the natives told me with great glee that it was built by Italians, I said that no Englishman made it and that it was made badly enough to please any Abyssinian. The river Uascet lay before our eyes as we commenced to descend but it was two hours before we crossed it. 18 yards wide 2 feet deep. Made camp on other side. Bought orisa [?] from coffee merchant for $2 only a ~~bottle~~ little [?]. Until we reached the river there was no water for 9 hours save 2 muddy wells.

Friday, January 2, 1902

~~Left~~

Marched from Uascet River to Arce (few miles beyond Adabai) 8 miles. 6½ hours. Yesterday as we were reaching the river we met a man with three donkey loads

of grain real value $1. We gave him $2. He accepted then refused & returned the money when he found we wanted him to carry the orisa to the river only quarter hour's march. I cannot understand these people. We were paying him double price yet the man was dissatisfied! Yesterday's march was very hard. If the road was kept in repair OK but its neglect leaves it in a horrible condition. Leaving the river we climbed over a steep road to the village of Dobat. Here is stationed a guard for the road. A palisade of rocks and poles cuts the road in two. Each caravan passing must pay toll. They did not bother us. Hence we had a rough precipitous way to the Adelbai or Blue Nile. In the summer a very broad stream fully 130 yds ~~yards~~ today 40 ~~yards~~ yds barely a foot deep. It is called the Mofer Hoa at this place. As we were lunching six or seven caravans passed with coffee & salt. Coffee worth $10 a ~~load~~ mule load, about? We had a very stiff climb to this place. On the whole, today's road, altho broad, was very rocky and hard going. Some of our mules backs are getting very bad. I shall indeed be relieved when we reach A.A. This incessant work palls on me for it's work not pleasure & I am getting damn tired of it. Plenty of wood.

Saturday, January 3, 1902

Marched from Arce to Gengaroabra [?]. 20 miles

9 hours. A continuous abrupt ascent for two hours before we reached the top of the mt. range. There a ~~great~~ great plain spread out before us. This was "Girru." After an hour's march we lunched as there is not good water for ten to twelve miles. While we were lunching there came crawling on the ground towards us two repulsive creatures. Whether men or women almost impossible [to tell] so eaten away by disease. In places their flesh had turned a white cream color. Abscesses ~~and~~ + tumors completed the horrible total. This has happened at least every four or five days thru'out Abyssinia. The road from here on was broad and smooth. On either side there were fields of ripening grain. Towards the east some 500 yards from the road bordering on the cliff were numerous villages. They certainly looked cleaner than those we were accustomed to see. Along side of most village walls were piled heaps of cattle dung formed into round cakes lying in the sun to dry. This was for fuel. No trees all day fit for fuel. Is.* fined the men ~~$~~1 dollar each for talking all night preventing us from sleeping. Also the cook ~~$1.00~~ 1 dollar for burning the tea the third consequetive time. Also Is. punched him about tonight for not obeying him promptly.

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* For "Isidore" mentioned later in full. Apparently, he was Morse's expedition manager.

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Sunday, January 4, 1902

Marched from Gengoroaba to Dimva. 18 miles. 9 hours. We got ~~started~~ early this morning. 8:00. A long monotenous day. While resting for luncheon I shot a few duck. An hour afterwards I shot some more. The road continued broad and level. The country quite flat till evening came on then became a bit more uneven. Just before making camp the caravan came to a deep and ~~m~~muddy crossing. They immediately started to ~~head~~ turn off for another road. We headed them off with some difficulty and quickly found a fair crossing ~~although~~ altho' owing to the men's usual stupidity a few boxes got a wetting. Is. gave the men a beating and from there to our camping place was kept very busy yelling at them to go one after another. A heavy down pour of rain commenced and kept up nearly till midnight. Is. gave another man a beating for not going to work quickly. The men pretended great difficulty about getting fuel but when I threatened [corbash?] they got it. The Galla who live about here are a rather hard lot to get along with as they don't understand our men's Tigré or ~~Amaric~~ Amharic speech.

Monday, January 5, 1902

Marched from Dimva to Gida 20 miles 9 hours. This morning another leper appeared. We drove him off

with some difficulty as they are looked upon with great fear but when Lo. went atto him with a spear he stood off at a distance and cursed us. We passed at least five of these horrible sights sitting by the road side begging. They are very pressing but the sight of a drawn revolver soon puts them at a distance. The road was easy over slightly rolling ground, Numerous villages of Gallas and plenty of water. Eggs rather expensive. 6 for 2 cartridges. We pressed on a bit today for it's so difficult to find out really how long it will take us to reach the Capital. Some travellers today said we could easily by going slowly reach it at mid day tomorrow. Others said on nightfall while two said not till Wednesday. We hope to get there tomorrow evening. I hope so for this is getting horribly monotonous and the men are getting lazier and lazier every day. The continued jumping up at day break rushing out + yelling to the men to "Fait bastes" [?]. I put on pack saddles then for the next hour + halt. Urging them to hurry up, interrupting my breakfast by running out to see that they don't drop their work to sit down has been my perpetual task for the last 3 months* or I am damn sick of it all!

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* Indicating that the safari had been underway since at least the beginning of October 1901.

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~~Tuesday~~ Monday, January 6, 1902 [Here Morse left the day as printed.]

Blank

Tuesday, January 7, 1902. [Day again not changed.]

Marched from to Adis Ababa.
Thank God!!!

All men paid up to Jan. 8 save Testa & Jacob who were paid up to 3rd and Idaris up to January 11.

[The daily diary is essentially suspended at this point. Apparently, Morse stayed in Addis until February 15. There are occasional notes during the period on stores and payments to men.]

Thursday, January 9, 1902 ~~[Day unchanged]~~ – Friday January 10, 1902 [Days unchanged]

Box No. 1

100	256 Manlicher ~~Manlicher~~	solid
150	303	split
50	380	hollow point
100	Revolver	
100	Shotgun no. 5	
50	" BB	
50	256 hollow old load	

Box 2	150	450	Holland	
	200	22	Winchester	
	50	577	Holland	solid point
	100	"		

~~Box 3~~

Box 3	50	303		solid
	50	303		soft
	100	256	Manlicher	soft
	30	"	"	solid
	150	Shotgun	No. 5	
	50	"	BB	

Box 4	5 boxes	shotgun	no. 5	
	200	256	Manlicher	soft
	50	303	[?]	split
	50	380	Rigby	

Box 5	145	Shonhauer	Manlicher	hollow
	100	380		
	200	303	split	
	100	450	hollow	
	200	256	Manlicher	old loading

Saturday, January 11, 1902 (Day unchanged.)

2 shields	$ 110
head man	20
Menelik dollars	14
	$ 144

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Sunday, Jany 12, 1902. [~~Day unchanged.~~]

Paid men $8 for food to last 10 days.

Wednesday, Jany 21, 1902

Paid ~~Do~~ $8 to Willie for men's food for 10 days.

Thursday, Jany 30, 1902

Paid $8 for food.

Monday, Febry 3, 1902

[A listing of 7 names and wages paid.]

Wednesday, Feby 4, 1902

Celebrated my birthday by an excellent dinner and plenty fizz. Poker before dinner phonograph afterwards. [Written in large sprawling scrawl suggesting it was written after the celebration.]

On February 7 and 8 there is a listing of stores:

Box 4 coffee baking powder tomato
9 bottles claret
Box 5 1b tins butter 1 oil candles tomato
Box 6 whiskey absenthe

Box 7 whiskey absenthe claret
Box 8 3 lobster 2 ? butter 12 compote des peches. 12 jam 6 Bologna 1 coffee 1 oil 8 butter 1 ?
1 candle 12 macaroni

Wine box no. 1
" " 2
" " 3 12 jam 30 candles & tea vinegar

Stores from Harrington
49 boxes sparklets [?]
package of ? light soap
tin tapioca
4 plum pudding
1 box dry ginger
1 " salt
4 tins biscuit
1 bottle chutney
2 bottles pickles
6 tins soup
1 " black currant
Worcester sauce
4 tins puree apples
2 " apricots
1 " pear
2 " curry powder
1 case of rice

On Friday, February 13, ~~1902~~ and continuing on the 14th, Morse entered a list of game species followed by three columns headed as follows:

	good head	record head	my best head
Grant's Gazelle	23	25 (28 not Aby.)	23 1/2
Oribi			
Hartebeaste	17	19	17 1/2
Reed buck (Bohor)	12	13 3/4	12 1/2
Water buck	33	36 (not Aby.)	32
Summering's Gazelle	16	21	16 3/8
Oryx	25 male 33 female	40	35
Lesser Kudoo	24 to 27	27	
Greater Kudoo	49 to 51		
Bush Buck	12	16 3/4	
Waller's Gazelle	14	17	

Then he has the following:

Grants Gazelle	IIIIII
Oribi	I
hartebeaste	IIIIII
reed buck	II
water buck	II
Oriel	IIIIIIII
oryx	IIIIII
hippo	I
zebra	I
Dig Dig	IIIIII
Bush buck	I
Waller's Gazelle	III

[There are numerals ranging from 50 to 87 written over 13 of the above vertical lines.]

Sunday, February 15, 1902

We left the agency, Adis Ababa, at 8.10 to meet our caravans, Duff's and ours, at the Hawash*. The road excellent. Sun moderate. After two hours continuous gallop we changed ponies near the Kaki [?] River and hurried on reaching the Hawash at 12:15 leaving Mt Sequala [or Gequala] on our left. My poor head ached frightfully all day and I felt devilish seedy altho' I was very moderate last night. We played poker till 1 o'clock. Lost $200 but won $550 from Isidor so I came out ahead all together. Our united camps are quite imposing. Duff has fifty six men and ovr hundred (camels, donkeys, & horses) animals. We have twenty eight men and forty mules. Duffs animals are tied in a large circle in the centre of the camp. Around the outskirts are the tents to keep off hyenas from the donkeys. We three dined together our cook assisting. Gave two new men ratim money.

* ~~[I camped on the Hawash (or Awash) River in 1906 with William Eddy and John Brown, then an FAO wildlife advisor to the Ethiopian government. RET]~~

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Monday, February 16, 1902

A short march, 2 hours and 1 half leaving at 6.30. Very warm in the middle of the day. We camped within two miles of the Hawash leaving it on our left. Numbers of Gallas came to ~~our~~ the camp selling beef, etc. Ls. & Duff went off to look for game. Ls came back with a few guinea ~~fowl~~ hens. Duff saw koodoo tracks. Dined in the open. Excellent dinner.

Tuesday, February 17, 1902

Marched 4 hours 11 miles. Less flat than yesterday. Slightly rolling country. We went directly toward the Meki [?]. Ought to strike it tomorrow. Saw a Hartebeaste and Hippo tracks. Duff took a look at the country. I was slightly tired having walked all the way. Today['s] march as well as yesterday rather warm work.

Wednesday, February 18, 1902

5 hours reached the Meki.

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Thursday, February 19, 1902

I left camp at six daybreak. Meet two Gallas who helped track game. Stalked an oribi but could not get near enough. Saw a Grants Gazelle, (no. 101),* 250 yds off creeping behind ant hills. Managed to to shoot him at 100 yds. He started to move off. Let him have another. He dropped. Fair head 19 in. My second shot unnecessary hit him on the left horn but fortunately did not break it. Sent head home by one of the men. Stalked some hartebeeste but could not get near enough. Shoot two oribi (102).** One female too far off to see as my glasses were at camp. Gave the natives the meat with which they were much pleased. In the afternoon went down to the Meki River. Saw a few oribi but did not shoot any as we have plenty of meat in ~~camp~~ camp. Found Ds. had turned up with the rest of the caravan at ten.

[A pencilled note in Morse's hand at bottom of the page says: Grants Gazelle
22 3/4 in
no. 101]

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* Apparently, these numbers refer to ~~the~~ the trophy heads he took. Obviously, he had shot considerable game before this volume of his diary opens.

** And, presumably, ~~[illegible]~~ no. 103

Friday, February 20, 1902

Reached Lake Zoai today at twelve.
On the way I saw a Hartebeest so taking my syce and rifle carrier I went off in pursuit. At 200 yds I fired hitting him in the hind quarters. He galloped off very quickly with an ugly canter holding his head down and to one side. This was my first view of an H., stands about 12 ½ hands, rich bay color getting lighter at the quarters. I rushed along in the hot sun after him. He would not let me get near him. I waited then till my syce came up with the horse. In a few minutes got within 250 yds. Leaving the nag I crawled to within 150 yds. Shot him in the shoulder. He dropped and my boy had just time to run up to him when he died. At least ten Gallas rushed up. Taking head & shoulder I left the meat to them. Head no. 102. Reached camp in 1¼ hours. By the lake shore water yellow not bad to drink. Late in P.M. went out, shot a good H. at 300 yds. but ~~shoke~~ shickiri [?] got in my line preventing me from shooting again so H. galloped off. Missed a Grant's gazelle at 200. Fell into herd of H. Shot one for meat. There must have been fifty of them, galloping down to the lake for water. Got dark so returned to camp. It got dark quite quickly but by yelling & firing off my pistol found the camp.
H. no. 104 & 105

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Saturday, February 21, 1902

Today I took it easy, not getting up till ten. After lunch I took a horse and two men and went to yesterday's shooting ground. After 1½ hours got into a herd of H. At least 60. Hard stalking for when I was keeping out of sight of my stalk another off to the other side of me would give the alarm. Finally I shot ~~two~~ 2. Kept one head (203). Made 3 gallas carry back some meat for my men leaving the rest to them. I had several shots at Grants Gazelle but could not get near enough. Kept shooting over. This makes my third H. Shall not shoot anymore unless hard up for meat. Had several long stalks after G.G. but all in vain, I's. shoot two Hartebeasts and one H. and one Grants yesterday.

Sunday, February 22, 1902

After lunch went out to place where Duff shot 3 Grants G. yesterday. Saw at least 20 Grants Gazelle but was frightfully off in my shooting. I wounded two but lost them both. I was very much discouraged with my shooting. For altho' they were rather wild still I should have shot five. I got back to camp tired out. Duff showed me a snake 9 feet long 7 in. in cir. which he came near stepping on only a few yards from camp. Africa is a charming country!

Monday, February 23, 1902

Woke up this morning with cold in my head & fever. Four hours march to ~~Sus~~ Susuci River. I felt very seedy. Took no luncheon, 25 grs. of quinine & dovers [?] powder. Kept in my tent all day had no dinner save some soup. Slept well.

Tuesday, February 24, 1902

Buckled up sufficiently to go out today. Shot two ~~heart~~ hartebeests but despite all my efforts they both got away. Also shot an oribi. Poor head but wanted the meat. Felt much better. Fever has left me but I have got a bad cold in my head.

Wednesday, Febry 25, 1902

Today I still kept up my poor shooting, wounding two Gazelle and following them for over two hours yet lost them in the end. Finally at 130 yds hit one just a little too far back of the shoulder. He trotted off & I followed as fast as I could taking advantage of all the cover I could. At 100 yds I shot again missing him clean then another catching him in the hind quarters. He moved slowly for a bit then sank behind a bush. I rushed up to where he lay only to get within ten feet of him ere he jumped up & bolted. My rifle jambed, so I gave him three shots with my Browning vainlessly (no revolver lighter than 450 with man stopping bullets is worth a damn).

For another hour I followed. At last after all a shot at 100 yds racking him fore & aft brought him down. Measured 21 1/4 in. no 106.

(If Ls. keeps up his same game as from Asmara here we wont have hardly a man stay with us. Where we are now it would be very difficult to get men. None but Gallas here. If we sent to A.A. the story of our men returning would result that no others would work for us.)

Wednesday, February 26, 1902

Today Duff, Ls., & I all started off together. I had not left them a half hour before I saw a G.G. 300 yds. I got within 200 but missed him. Then creeping to 100 yds knocked him over nicely. Measured 22 in. no 1--. I wasted at least a doz. cartridges firing at some G.G. at 300, 200 & 150. Hit two but they all got off. Finally determined to bring back some H. So creeping near a herd of some 20, I took a very full sight and aiming at the bottom of the body below the shoulder knocked over two dead with a right & left barrel. Both measured just over 17 in. no 2 & 4. [?] After this I must take care to take a fuller sight. That Mannlicher which I bought from Ls. takes a lot of learning. Just before we had dinner all our men came up and the spokesman complained that Ls. had been beating two of the men,

that they had heard how the men from Asmara to A.A. had been beaten, stuck with bayonets, etc., & that if any punishing was to be done their head man should do it. It seems, when out shooting, Ls. syce had told the mule man to stay back. Understanding or not, he didn't. Ls. hammered him, day before whipped another for not doing what he said in Eng. Don't know whether man understood or not. I called Ls. out of his tent and just as I expected Ls. rushed at the man and began to hammer him again. Then all the crowd left. Duff & I agree on the absurdity of Ls. methods of running a caravan of Abyssinians.

Thursday, February 27, 1902

This morning at seven I was called out of bed on a request to look over our kit as all the men were going to leave. I was ~~just~~ just in time to call the cook & a few others who were already quarter mile off. After a long palaver the men said they were willing and anxious ~~to~~ to work for me but no one would work for Ls. They first said that if Ls. remained in charge they would all leave so I said that they would all be my servants save one man who volunteered to serve Ls. The cook said he would like to stay but that he had heard how Ls. had beaten the other men & he was afraid and that if his friends went he would go. I set them all in a good humor by telling the cook I would get a Galla wife for him. Then I gave the whole crowd a lot of stuff. I told them that I should give each one a servant, a wife,

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a mule, and anything else they might think of, etc., etc. Then I left them, as they agreed to stay. It will be the devil's own job to get others if they dont stay.

Saturday, Febry 28, 1902

I went out this afternoon and knocked down a G.G. No. 7. 23 in. and a H. no. 18, 15 1/2 in. with one shot each. Very satisfactory [in view] of my making so many misses lately. Got a bit twisted returning to camp. Did not get in till seven. Very dark. After I had shot the H. five Gallas appeared in a moment and cutting up what we left of the body began to have a feast of the raw meat not two minutes killed. Still such diet does not seem to make them very sturdy for they are a slight lot altogether. Dutt said he had ~~paid~~ fired eight shots at a H. without killing him so I sat down to dinner feeling more satisfied with myself. Isidor says he is going to ~~throw~~ throw up the trip and leave me at the Hawash and go to Adis Ababa. Disgusted with the natives refusing to work for him. 10 to 1 he doesn't!

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